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INSIDE TODAY

WORLD NEWS

U.S. ARREST




The exterior of Hotel Al Saddam where arrested American Muslims allegedly stayed is seen in Karachi, Pakistan on Monday, Dec. 14, 2009.

Read more on Page A6

SPORTS NEWS

TIGER & TV



In this Oct. 9, 2005 file photo, Tiger Woods tips his hat to the crowd before teeing off on the first hole during the final round of the American Express World Golf Championships at Harding Park in San Francisco.

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President Barack Obama makes a statement on the economy, Monday, Dec. 14, 2009, in the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House in Washington, after his meeting with financial services executives.

Associated Press

Obama to banks: ease lending to businesses

**DANIEL WAGNER
PHILIP ELLIOTT**
Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama told top bankers Monday to explore “every responsible way” to increase lending, saying they were obliged to help repair the U.S. economy after being saved by the taxpayer-funded bailout.

In a statement after more than an hour with the executives, Obama said he reminded them that much of the financial crisis that took the U.S. banking system to the brink of collapse had been “of their own making.”

He also exhorted the executives — both in private and in public — to drop their opposition to an overhaul of the U.S. financial industry.

“If they wish to fight common sense consumer protections, that’s a fight I’m more than willing to have,” Obama told reporters at the White House. Although the bailout of the banks is credited with avoiding a financial collapse, it has also prompted anger among many Americans that the government has been helping wealthy bankers while ignoring the plight of ordinary people at a time of rising unemployment. This could be an issue that would hurt Obama’s Democrats in next November’s elections. Obama also urged lenders to find creative ways to free up lending. Obama said banks have benefited from bailouts and should use that strength to lend more money to consumer and businesses.

“But given the difficulty business people are having as lending has declined and given the exceptional assistance banks received to get them through a difficult time,” he said, “we expect them to explore every responsible way to help get our economy moving again.” Delay, he said, was not an option he was willing to consider.

Continued on Page 4



In this photo released by the semi-official Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA), chief of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, listens to a question during a joint press conference with Russian Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko, unseen, during their visit to the Iran’s Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant, just outside the southern port city of Bushehr, Iran, Monday, Nov. 30, 2009.

Associated Press

Officials: World power meeting on Iran canceled

GEORGE JAHN
Associated Press Writer

VIENNA (AP) — An upcoming meeting by five world powers on trying to curb Iran’s nuclear program has been canceled at China’s request, senior officials from three of the countries involved said Monday.

One of the officials said China cited scheduling problems in asking for the cancellation, and the five now plan to talk by conference call.

Continued on Page B9



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22 million missing Bush White House e-mails found



In this Jan. 12, 2009 file photo, President George W. Bush speaks during a news conference in the pressroom at the White House in Washington. Two nonprofit groups, the National Security Archive and Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington said Monday Dec. 14, 2009 that computer technicians have found 22 million White House e-mails from the administration of President George W. Bush.

By PETE YOST

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Computer technicians have found 22 million missing White House e-mails from the administration of President George W. Bush and the Obama administration is searching for dozens more days' worth of potentially lost e-mail from the Bush years, according to two groups that

filed suit over the failure by the Bush White House to install an electronic record keeping system.

The two private groups — Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington and the National Security Archive — said Monday they were settling the lawsuits they filed against the Executive Office of the President in 2007.

Associated Press

It will be years before the public sees any of the recovered e-mails because they will now go through the National Archives' process for releasing presidential and agency records. Presidential records of the Bush administration won't be available until 2014 at the earliest.

Former Bush White House spokesman Scott Stanzel said the 22 million e-mails already had been recovered while Bush was still in office and that misleading statements about the former administration's work demonstrate "a continued anti-Bush agenda, nearly a year after a new president was sworn in."

"The liberal groups CREW and National Security Archive litigate for sport, distort the facts and have consistently tried to create a spooky conspiracy out of standard IT issues," Stanzel said in a statement. The 22 million e-mails "would never have been found but for our lawsuits and pressure from Capitol Hill," said Anne Weismann, chief counsel for CREW. "It was only then that they did this

reanalysis and found as a result that there were 22 million e-mails that they were unable to account for before."

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., said the Bush administration had been dismissive of congressional requests that the administration recover the e-mails. Leahy said it was "another example of the Bush administration's reflexive resistance to congressional oversight and the public's right to know."

The tally of missing e-mails, the additional searches and the settlement are the latest development in a political controversy that stemmed from the Bush White House's failure to install a properly working electronic record keeping system. Two federal laws require the White House to preserve its records.

The two private organizations say there is not yet a final count on the extent of missing White House e-mail and there may never be a complete tally.

Meredith Fuchs, general counsel to the National Security Archive, said "many poor choices were made during the Bush administration and there was little concern about the availability of e-mail records despite the fact that they were contending with regular subpoenas for records and had a legal obligation to preserve their records."

"We may never discover the full story of what happened here," said Melanie Sloan, CREW's executive director. "It seems like they just didn't want the e-mails preserved." Sloan said the latest count of misplaced e-mails "gives us confirmation that the Bush administration lied when they said no e-mails were missing."

The two groups say the 22 million White House e-mails were previously mislabeled

and effectively lost.

The government now can find and search 22 million more e-mails than it could in late 2005 and the settlement means that the Obama administration will restore 94 calendar days of e-mail from backup tape, said Kristen Lejnicks, an attorney representing the National Security Archive.

Stanzel, the former White House spokesman, said that the 94 days of e-mails to be recovered from back-up tapes consist of 61 calendar days already planned in the Bush era and an additional 33 days of recovery that the Obama White House have agreed to recover as part of the settlement of the court case.

Sheila Shadmand, another lawyer representing the National Security Archive, said the Obama administration is making a strong effort to clean up "the electronic data mess left behind by the prior administration."

Records released as a result of the lawsuits reveal that the Bush White House was aware during the president's first term in office that the e-mail system had serious archiving problems, which didn't become publicly known until 2006, when federal prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald disclosed them during his criminal investigation of the outing of CIA operative Valerie Plame.

A Microsoft Corp. document on the Bush White House's e-mail problems states that Microsoft was called in to help find electronic messages in October 2003, more than two years before the problem surfaced publicly. October 2003 was the month that the Justice Department began gearing up its criminal investigation into who in the Bush administration leaked the identity of Plame, the wife of Bush administration war critic Joseph Wilson. □

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Study shows pot more popular among teenagers

By DAVID N. GOODMAN

Associated Press Writer

DETROIT — Smoking marijuana is becoming even more popular among U.S. teens and they have cut down on smoking cigarettes, binge drinking and using methamphetamine, according to a federal survey released Monday. More teens also are getting high on prescription pain pills and attention-deficit drugs, according to eighth, 10th and 12th graders surveyed by the University of Michigan for the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The increase of teens smoking pot is partly because the national debate over medical use of marijuana can make the drug's use seem safer to teenagers, researchers said. In addition to marijuana, fewer teens also view prescription drugs and Ecstasy as dangerous, which often means more could use those drugs in the future, said White House drug czar Gil Kerlikowske. The "continued erosion in youth attitudes and behavior toward substance abuse should give pause to all parents and policy-makers," Kerlikowske said.

"These latest data confirm that we must redouble our efforts to implement a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to preventing and treating drug use," Kerlikowske, the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, said in remarks prepared for his Monday speech at the National Press

Club in Washington.

Marijuana use, while well off peak levels of the late 1990s, has edged up. According to the study of 47,097 students, among this year's 12th graders, 20.6 percent said they used it within the past month, compared with 19.4 percent in 2008 and 18.3 percent in 2006.

Among 10th graders, pot use in the past month rose to 15.9 percent this year from 13.8 percent in 2008.

"The upward trending of the past two or three years stands in stark contrast to the steady decline that preceded it for nearly a decade," said Lloyd Johnston, who has directed the annual survey since it started in 1975.

The percentage of eighth-graders who saw a "great risk" in occasionally smoking marijuana fell from 50.5 percent in 2004 to 48.1 percent in 2008 and 44.8 percent this year. The perceived danger of using Ecstasy once or twice fell among eighth graders, from 42.5 percent in 2004 to 26 percent in 2009.

"When the perception of the danger goes down, in the following years you see an increase in use," said National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Nora Volkow.

Volkow said teens falsely reason it's less dangerous to get high on prescription drugs "because they're endorsed by the medical community." But she said prescription narcotics like OxyContin and Vicodin are highly addictive and can act as gateways to heroin, a

cheaper high.

Use rates of both prescription narcotics rose among this year's 10th graders, with 8.1 percent saying they had used Vicodin in the past year compared with 6.7 percent of the same grade in 2008. For OxyContin, the figure rose to 5.1 percent from 3.6 percent.

Recreational use of the attention-deficit drug Ritalin was lower than five years ago.

But the attention-deficit drug Adderall, appearing for this first time in this year's survey, showed use rates similar to those for Ritalin at its peak, which for 12th graders was around 5 percent. By all measures, alcohol remained the most widely used illicit substance among teens, with 43.5 percent of 12th graders reporting taking a drink in the past month. That's a little change from last year, but down from 52.7 percent in 1997 — a year that showed high percentages of substance abuse. All three grades reported drops in binge drinking for 2004-2009.

Cigarette use patterns showed a continuation of the dramatic drop from a decade ago. In 1997, 19.4 percent of eighth graders reported smoking within a month. That fell to 6.8 percent last year and 6.5 percent this year. The rate for 12th graders dropped from 36.5 percent in 1997 to 20.1 percent this year.

"There's not going to be much further improvement unless policies change," such as higher taxes to



This photo provided by National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) shows NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow, left, accompanied by National Drug Control Policy Director R. Gil Kerlikowske, announcing the results of the 2009 Monitoring the Future survey, Monday, Dec. 14, 2009, at the National Press Club in Washington.

Associated Press

discourage kids on a budget and further limits on public smoking, Johnston said. Only 2.4 percent of this year's 12th graders said they'd ever used methamphetamine, down from 2.8 percent in 2008 and 8.2 percent in 1999. □

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President Barack Obama makes a statement on the economy, Monday, Dec. 14, 2009, in the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House in Washington, after his meeting with financial services executives.

EASE LENDING

Continued from Front Page

“And so I urged these institutions here today to go back and take a third and fourth look about how they are operating when it comes to small business and medium-sized business lending,” he said.

Bank of America chief executive Kenneth Lewis pledged to Obama his bank would lend \$5 billion more to small-and mid-sized businesses in 2010 than it did in 200. The bank said the move is part of the its broader effort to support an economic recovery.

JPMorgan said last month that it would boost such lending by \$4 billion.

Obama’s stern talking-to came hours after Citigroup Inc. said that it is repaying \$20 billion in bailout money it received from the Treasury Department, in an effort to reduce government influence over the banking giant. The

Associated Press

government will also sell its stake in the company.

The New York-based bank was among the hardest hit by the credit crisis and rising loan defaults and got one of the largest bailouts of any banks during the financial crisis. The government gave it \$45 billion in loans and agreed to protect losses on nearly \$300 billion in risky investments. Wells Fargo & Co. remains the last national bank that has yet to pay back its bailout money.

The bailout repayment news kept Citigroup chief Vikram Pandit from attending Monday’s meeting, Citi spokeswoman Molly Millerwise Meiners said. She said chairman Richard Parsons planned to attend but bad weather kept him from reaching Washington in time. The White House said Parsons and two other executives listened to the meeting by telephone because of a heavy fog over Washington. The two others were Goldman Sachs

chairman and chief executive Lloyd Blankfein and Morgan Stanley chairman and chief executive John Mack.

Despite Obama’s pointed words, the bankers have said lending is limited by factors beyond their control: The sluggish economy and tighter oversight by regulators. The slow economy has businesses reluctant to expand — and makes banks more grim about their prospects. Loan applications are down.

Meanwhile, regulators are telling banks to be more skeptical about potential borrowers. They are forcing banks to keep larger cushions of capital to protect against future losses. That means there’s less money available to lend.

The meeting came amid

Obama’s fierce criticism of Wall Street. In an interview that aired on Sunday, Obama rebuked executive paychecks at firms that only last year required tax dollars to keep their doors open.

“I did not run for office to be helping out a bunch of fat cat bankers on Wall Street,” Obama told CBS television’s “60 Minutes.”

Bankers, however, brushed off Obama’s harsh rhetoric.

US Bancorp chief Richard Davis denied that there was any rancor after Obama’s “fat cats” comment.

“It was an opportunity for the president to make clear how important some of these issues are,” he told reporters in the White House driveway.

“We haven’t done as good a job as we can in the future

to align the interests of our constituents with those of the American public.”

Davis added: “I think we agree there are better ways to do that, and he gave us some very good ideas about how to do better communicating that.”

To that end, work continued on legislation to overhaul financial regulations.

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner—who sat at the table with Obama and the bankers—was also meeting Monday with Senate Banking Committee chairman Christopher Dodd, a Democrat, and the committee’s top Republican, Richard Shelby of Alabama.

After House passage of a regulatory overhaul Friday, the work now shifts to the Senate, which has been preoccupied with health care legislation. □

GAO orders review of \$3B Army contract

HOUSTON (AP) — The U.S. Army must re-evaluate a \$3 billion contract awarded to the Oshkosh Corp. for 23,000 military trucks and trailers, congressional investigators said Monday.

Two companies that had bid for the deal and lost protested after Oshkosh won the contract. BAE Systems-Tactical Defense Systems LP, a subsidiary of a British defense firm, and Navistar Defense LLC questioned whether Oshkosh could make

the vehicles at the price it quoted.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office denied the price quote protest on Monday, but upheld some of the companies’ other points, finding that the Army’s evaluation of their bids was flawed.

It directed the Army to reconsider the proposals of BAE and Warrenville, Illinois-based Navistar for their capability to fulfill the contract to build the vehicles, as well

as their past performance.

The Army has 60 days to respond, according to the GAO.

The Oshkosh, Wisconsin-based company’s chief executive, Robert Bohn, said Oshkosh believes its offer is still the best value and that it expects to keep the contract after the Army reviews the two remaining issues.

In separate statements, BAE Systems and Navistar officials expressed pleasure and confidence.

According to a BAE Systems statement, the Sealy, Texas-based subsidiary of the British company has already built more than 56,000 of the vehicles over the past 17 years and designed the new armor the contract specifies for the vehicles.

The Army awarded Oshkosh the contract on Aug. 26, with production scheduled to start in 2011. The contract work was expected to employ about 2,000 people.

The Greater Houston Partnership, a southeast Texas regional chamber of commerce, has said the BAE Sealy plant accounts for about 10,000 jobs at the plant and surrounding suppliers. □

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U.S. firm stockpiled temporary-worker visas

MARYCLAIRE DALE
Associated Press Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP)

— A Pennsylvania staffing company gamed the nation's visa program by obtaining hundreds of work visas under names culled from a Mexican phonebook and supplying the paperwork to illegal immigrants placed in landscaping and other seasonal jobs, authorities said Monday. "They were almost like a shadow government, because they procured all these visas, and they were the ones able to control who's getting them," Assistant U.S. Attorney Kevin R. Brenner told The Associated Press.

International Personnel Resources Inc. had dozens of clients, many of them landscapers, builders and golf courses in the mid-Atlantic.

In some cases, undocumented workers were sent home and given stockpiled visas to re-enter the country and return to their jobs, authorities said. International Personnel Resources would coach them to tell immigration officials they had never been in the country illegally, according to the 11-count federal information.

The workers came from Mexico and Central and South America. International Personnel kept a Mexican phonebook at its office in West Chester, about 30 miles from Philadelphia, and used it to choose names for visa applications, prosecutors said. It accumulated hundreds of the visas for arriving workers from 2003 to 2008, the government said.

H-2B visas are designed for companies that cannot find Americans willing to work as temporary seasonal laborers. Given the nation's cap on H-2B visas, the scheme left fewer available for companies trying to bring in workers lawfully, prosecutors said.

The defendants are owner and President Michael T. Glah, 48, of West Chester, and three others. Glah had been discussing the case with

prosecutors for more than a year and knew the charges were imminent, defense lawyer Robert J. Donatoni said. He noted that the filing of an information suggests a likely guilty plea, but otherwise declined to comment. □

This frame grab image taken from a video issued by al-Sahab, al-Qaida's media branch and provided by IntelCenter shows a video statement from Adam Gadahn the new English-language video Saturday Dec. 12, 2009 denied it was behind a series of bombings in Pakistan that have killed hundreds of civilians, calling such attacks un-Islamic.

Associated Press



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Pakistan police probe Americans in terror case



In this five-combo photo released by Sargodha Police Department on Friday, Dec. 11, 2009, arrested American Muslims, from left, Waqar Hussain, Ramy Zamzam, Umar Farooq, Ahmad Minni, Aman Yemer are seen in Sargodha, Pakistan. Pakistani police say five young American Muslims detained over alleged terrorist links are most likely to be deported.

Associated Press

**ASHRAF KHAN
BABAR DOGAR**

Associated Press Writers

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistani police Monday seized luggage and a cell phone from a hotel where three of five Americans

arrested on suspicion of militant links stayed, while a court ruled the men cannot be deported until judges review the case.

Police allege the young Americans intended to join militants in the northwest

tribal areas and then travel to Afghanistan before their arrest last week. The case has fanned fears that Americans and other Westerners are heading to Pakistan to link up with al-Qaida and other militant groups.

Police searched the mid-range Saddam Hotel in the southern city of Karachi, the country's commercial hub, where some of the men stayed on Nov. 30 after their arrival in the country. They found five travel bags containing clothes, a cell phone and a book, police official Abdullah Sheikh said.

Hotel manager Mohammed Farooq Khan said the three left the hotel without informing management after staying one night.

The book was "The Pact," the best-selling true story

of three young men from broken homes who pledged to support each other as they pursue academic dreams.

The detainees are accused of using Facebook and YouTube Web sites to try and connect with extremist groups in Pakistan and are said to have established contact with a Taliban recruiter. They have not been charged with any crime.

The court order Monday was aimed at preventing any deportation of the Americans before the judiciary gets a chance to review the case, Lahore High Court registrar Tahir Pervez said. No deportation order is known to have been issued so far, but officials in both countries have said such a move is likely.

The court issued the order in response to a petition from

Khalid Khawaja, a civil rights activist who has often filed court cases on behalf of alleged militants and people believed to have disappeared at the hands of Pakistan's security apparatus.

Pervez said the court ordered the government of Punjab province to file a report on the case in a hearing Thursday.

The men, who are from the Washington, D.C. area, were picked up by Pakistani authorities last week in the Punjab town of Sargodha after their worried families in the U.S. turned to the FBI to track them down. They were shifted over the weekend to Lahore, the provincial capital, for further questioning.

FBI agents, who have been granted some access to the men, are trying to see if there is enough evidence to charge any of them with conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist group, an American official and another person familiar with the case said Friday.

State Department spokesman Ian Kelly, speaking to reporters in Washington, said the men last received a consular visit on Friday.

"We've had excellent cooperation with the Pakistani authorities, both on the diplomatic side and on the law enforcement side," he said. "And the Pakistani authorities granted us access to the six individuals within 24 hours of our request, which is a very speedy response." □



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Attack on Italian PM reveals nation's divisions

ALESSANDRA RIZZO

Associated Press Writer

ROME (AP) — Even hospitalized and in pain, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi can polarize Italians.

The bloody image of Berlusconi, reeling after being attacked as he signed autographs following a rally Sunday, has created sympathy and solidarity on one hand, while on the other generating praise for his attacker on Facebook and YouTube.

The strong reactions were similar to those Berlusconi has drawn during his 15 years in politics.

"The bloodied, stunned, scared face of Silvio Berlusconi will remain an icon in the history of this republic," said a national newspaper, La Stampa, which is not owned by Berlusconi's media company.

Berlusconi, 73, was rushed to the San Raffaele hospital in Milan after a man pushed through the crowd and hit him in the face with a souvenir statue of Milan's Duomo, the Gothic cathedral that is a symbol of the city.

The attacker, identified as 42-year-old Massimo Tartaglia, was arrested at the scene and remained in jail in Milan. Police and family members said he had no criminal record but a history of mental problems.

Italy's ANSA news agency reported late Monday that Tartaglia had written a letter to Berlusconi, saying he was sorry for his "superficial, cowardly and uncontrolled" act.

Berlusconi was in pain Tuesday, unable to eat or leave the hospital for at least another day, said his doctor, Alberto Zangrillo.

The attack left the premier with a fractured nose, two broken teeth and lip cuts. He was being given antibiotics and drugs for persistent pain, the hospital said in a midday bulletin. He will not need surgery, Zangrillo said.

The attack, which shocked Italians, came amid an

increasingly tense political atmosphere.

Berlusconi has for months denounced a "climate of hatred" he says surrounds him as he fends off a sex scandal and judicial troubles.

His spokesman, Paolo Bonaiuti, said this feeling was stronger than ever in the hours that preceded the attack, even in the car ride toward the rally.

"He told me, 'You know, this climate of hatred and tension really leaves me worried,'" Bonaiuti said Monday. "Don't you think something might happen to me?"

Since he stepped into politics in the mid-1990s, Berlusconi has further polarized Italy — a society that has been split into fiercely opposed factions for centuries.

His critics charge that the media mogul-turned-politician assembles so much power that he is a threat to democracy, bending the law to his advantage. Admirers love his charisma, wealth, even his jokes.

To them, he is what they would like to be. They praise his can-do persona and believe he is a reformist.

Despite legal woes and conflict-of-interest accusations, Berlusconi has been voted into office three times. His latest victory in 2006 signaled his triumphant return to power less than two years after his second term ran out and he narrowly lost elections to a center-left coalition.

So strong are the sentiments that an aide years ago wrote a book collecting the insults that political adversaries had thrown at the conservative leader.

But even by the Italian standards of mudslinging, the climate has become increasingly tense in recent months, with Berlusconi becoming increasingly vitriolic in the face of rising protests.

Italy's largest newspaper, Corriere della Sera, said Monday that politics in Italy had come to resemble "civil

war."

"The violent aggression on the premier is the result of this degeneration," said the newspaper, which is independent of Berlusconi's holdings.

Berlusconi is entangled in scandals over his purported fondness for young women and an alleged relationship with a prostitute.

The premier's wife is divorcing him, but Berlusconi insists he has never paid for sex, nor had inappropriate relationships.

He has been buffeted by protests, with tens of thousands marching in Rome on Dec. 5 to demand his resignation. And a Mafia turncoat recently alleged that Berlusconi had ties to the underworld, an accusation the premier has forcefully dismissed.

Despite setbacks and some squabbling with his allies, his popularity has remained high. The attack might reinforce that. "True Italians are always with you," said a well-wishing



This image made available by the Italian Premier's office shows Massimo Tartaglia, 42, who Italian police said was suspected of attacking Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi at the end of a rally in Milan, Italy on Sunday Dec. 13, 2009 leaving the 73-year-old media mogul with a bloodied mouth and looking stunned.

Associated Press

banner posted on the walls of the hospital.

Berlusconi has fired back against his detractors, launching vehement attacks that have added to the poisonous climate.

He said the magistrates who put him on trial for corruption are politically motivated communists. Last week he denounced the "party of magistrates" as a threat to Italy's sovereignty, and he has also attacked the Supreme Court and the president of the republic.

Roberto Maroni, who as

interior minister is in charge of police forces, said he counted some 300 groups on Facebook praising Berlusconi's assailant, and he was considering pulling them off the social network. He also mentioned YouTube videos showing the attack with comments inciting more violence.

Maroni presided over an emergency meeting in Milan that put the security surrounding the premier under scrutiny. The minister said he did not see any immediate faults, but added that a full review would take place. □

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Developing countries end boycott at climate talks

MICHAEL CASEY

Associated Press Writer

COPENHAGEN (AP)

— Poor countries ended a boycott of U.N. climate talks Monday after getting assurances that rich nations were not conspiring to soften their commitments to cutting greenhouse gases, European officials said.

European Union environment spokesman Andreas

Carlgren said informal talks resolved the impasse, which was started by African countries and backed by major developing countries, including China and India.

Rich and poor countries “found a reasonable solution,” he said.

Developing countries agreed to return to all working groups that they abandoned earlier in the day at the 192-nation conference, said Anders Frandsen, a spokesman for conference president Connie Hedegaard.

The boycott had disrupted efforts to forge a pact on global warming and forced the cancellation of formal working groups, delaying the frantic work of negotiators trying to resolve technical issues before the arrival of more than 110 world leaders, including President Barack Obama, later this week.

The move was largely seen as a ploy to shift the agenda to the responsibilities of the industrial countries and make emissions reductions the first item for discussion Tuesday.

“We are really prepared to discuss all issues in the negotiations. It means also absolutely all issues under the Kyoto Protocol,” Carlgren said.

The developing countries want to extend the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which imposed penalties on rich nations if they did not comply with its strict emissions limits but made no such binding demands on developing nations.

Poor countries, supported by China, said Hedegaard had raised suspicion that



Former U.S. Vice President Al Gore gestures as he joins cabinet ministers from Nordic countries for discussion on Greenland's ice sheet at the UN Climate summit in Copenhagen, Denmark, Monday, Dec. 14, 2009. With a week for the climate summit to end, the split between the developing and developed world became sharper as ministers of the world's nations started to arrive for a crucial second week of climate talks.

the conference was likely to kill the Kyoto Protocol. The United States withdrew from Kyoto over concerns that it would harm the U.S. economy and that China, India and other major greenhouse gas emitters were not required to take action. China is now the world's largest greenhouse gas polluter.

It was the second time the Africans have disrupted the climate talks. At the last round of negotiations in November, the African bloc forced a one-day suspension until wealthy countries agreed to spell out what steps they will take to reduce emissions.

“They are trying to put the pressure on” before Obama and other world leaders arrive, said Gustavo Silva-Chavez, a climate change specialist with the Environmental Defense Fund. “They want to make sure that developed countries are not left off the hook.”

An African delegate said developing countries decided to block the negotiations at a meeting hours before the conference was to resume. He said applause broke out every time China, India or another country supported the proposal to stall the talks.

But not all developing countries supported the

move. Carlgren said Maldives President

Mohamed Nasheed, whose island nation is threatened by rising sea levels, delivered an impersonate plea to the delegates to resume talks.

Later Monday, Nasheed told The Associated Press that there was a wide range of opinions in the bloc of developing countries, which includes both impoverished nations and fast-growing economies like China.

“There are countries who do not agree to what is happening here but I don't think we should put all the developing countries together and say there is one unified or one single voice coming out,” Nasheed said after delivering a speech to climate activists in Copenhagen.

Canada's Environment Minister Jim Prentice said the dispute was a setback to negotiations.

“We have lost some time. There is no doubt about that,” Prentice said. “It is not particularly helpful, but all in all it is our responsibility to get on with it and continue to negotiate.”

A draft agreement distributed last week to the conference set no firm figures on cutting greenhouse gas emissions blamed for global warming nor financing.

Scientist have warned that the commitments so far fall short of what is needed to keep global temperature increases below 2 degrees C (3.6 F) above preindustrial levels and head off the worst of global warming.

Former U.S. Vice President Al Gore illustrated that point when he told the conference the Arctic polar ice cap may disappear in the summer just a few years from now.

Some computer models suggest “that there is a 75 percent chance that the entire north polar ice cap during some of the summer months will be completely ice-free within the next five to seven years,” Gore said.

Gore, who won a Nobel Peace Prize for his work on climate change, joined the foreign ministers of Norway and Denmark in presenting two new reports on melting Arctic ice.

Countries have so far only offered short-term pledges to help developing countries deal with climate change, including the U.S. which on Monday announced a new program drawing funds from international partners to spend \$350 million over five years to give developing nations clean energy technology to curb greenhouse gas emissions and reduce global

warming.

The program will distribute solar power alternatives for homes, including sun-powered lanterns, supply cleaner equipment and appliances and work to develop renewable energy systems in the world's poorer nations.

The U.S. share of the program will amount to \$85 million, with the rest coming from Australia, Britain, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland, Energy Secretary Steven Chu said in Copenhagen.

Meanwhile, some leaders announced they were moving up their dates for arriving in Copenhagen in a bid to inject momentum into the talks.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's office said he would go to Copenhagen on Tuesday, two days earlier than planned. His spokesman denied that Brown — facing a national election by June — was seeking any personal credit if a deal is struck.

Throngs of newly arrived delegates, journalists and climate activists jammed the security and accreditation lines at the conference center, forcing police to shut down the nearby subway stop.

In downtown Copenhagen, police said they detained about 20 people among 3,000 climate activists protesting outside Parliament.

More than 1,200 others were detained in weekend protests, although almost all were released after questioning. About a dozen were arraigned on preliminary charges of assaulting police officers or carrying sharp objects.

There were also sporadic reports of vandalism across the city overnight Monday. Police said 12 cars were set on fire, including three vehicles belonging to Danish power company Dong Energy. Vandals also smashed windows and threw red paint at the headquarters of the Danish Immigration Service. It was not immediately clear whether those attacks were related to the conference. □

MEETING ON IRAN

Continued from Front Page

The official said China seemed to have genuine problems in attending the meeting in Brussels or outside the Copenhagen climate summit and did not appear to be seeking to delay it. Still, the development was a setback in efforts to present a unified front on Iran in the face of continued Iranian defiance on its nuclear program.

Because it relies on Iran for gas and oil, China is the weakest link in international attempts to punish the country for defying a U.N. Security Council demand that it stop enriching uranium, a process that can make both nuclear fuel and the fissile core of warheads.

The world powers also have to worry about an increasingly edgy Israel. The Jewish state sees an Islamic Republic with such weapons as an existential threat — and has repeatedly indicated it is ready to hit Iran militarily.

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak urged the world to agree to tough new penalties while again suggesting that military strikes remained an option.

“There is a need for tough sanctions,” Barak told reporters in Vienna during an official visit. “Something that is well and coherently coordinated to include the Americans, the EU, the Chinese, the Russians, the Indians.”

At the same time, he said, “we recommend to all players not to remove any options from the table,” just as “we do not remove it.”

In Washington, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton acknowledged that U.S. administration’s nearly yearlong effort to engage Iran has fallen short and new sanctions are needed to press Tehran to provide more information about its suspect nuclear program.

Clinton’s pessimistic remarks come as an end-of-year deadline, set by President Barack Obama, looms for the Iranians to prove that their nuclear intentions are peaceful.

She said the administration has offered Iran a chance to participate in meaningful

discussions about its nuclear activities and intentions or face fresh penalties for defiance in line with the dual-track, carrot-and-stick approach.

That dual effort, though, has “produced very little,” she said, adding that “additional pressure is going to be called for” to get results.

During seven years of failed international diplomacy, Iran has moved closer to being able to make nuclear arms, even while insisting that its atomic program is meant solely to generate energy.

Its thousands of centrifuges have produced enough enriched uranium to make two nuclear weapons — even though it maintains the stockpile will only be used for nuclear fuel and not for weapons-grade material.

It has only recently — and belatedly — revealed that it is building a second enrichment site and is stonewalling an International Atomic Energy Agency probe of allegations that it had experimented with making nuclear weapons.

Iran threatened this month to expand its enrichment program tenfold, while rejecting an IAEA-brokered plan to supply fuel for its research reactor if Iran exports of most of its enriched stockpile — a move that would strip it of its warhead material.

The U.S., France and Britain — the three Western permanent U.N. Security Council members — are trying to persuade Russia and China to back new and tough Security Council sanctions on Iran as early as the start of next year, should other diplomatic options fail.

But Russia in recent days has moved away from suggesting it would support such a move. And recent statements from Chinese officials indicate that Beijing has not changed its traditional opposition to new sanctions.

While Russia and China signed on to three previous sets of U.N. sanctions against Iran, they also forced their Western Security Council partners to water them down substantially. China’s balancing act on Iran reflects its global strategy of trying to insert itself into the U.S.-led world order, working

with Washington when it can — and opposing U.S. policies when they conflict with its own. □

Canada’s Christine Nesbitt looks up at her time after finishing first in the women’s 1000-meter event at the World Cup speedskating competition at the Utah Olympic Oval, Sunday, Dec. 13, 2009, in Kearns, Utah. Nesbitt won the event with the time of 1:13.36.

Associated Press



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Kanye, Tiger, the Gosselins — our unfortunate 2009



FILE - In this photo released by the White House Nov. 27, 2009, shows President Barack Obama greeting Michaela and Tareq Salahi, right, at a State Dinner hosted by Obama for Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the White House in Washington Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009.

(AP Photo/The White House, Samantha Appleton, file)

By **NEKESA MUMBI MOODY**,

AP Music Writer

If only there were more Kanye Wests in the world.

No wait — lemme finish!! Yes, West proved he was a complete jerk when he jumped onstage and interrupted Taylor Swift's glory moment at the MTV Video Music Awards. It was a moment audiences live to see.

But what if West could have interrupted those other moments we didn't want to see?

Then we wouldn't be nursing scarred brains caused by 2009's worst moments, such as: a smiling Joe Jackson hawking his record label for cameras a few days after his son Michael's death; octo-dad Jon Goesslin's creepy transformation from henpecked husband to sleazy bachelor; any of Chris Brown's halfhearted apologies; Tiger Woods' transgressions of the heart.

A sampling of more Wacky & Tacky:

TIGER'S SWING: Did you ever think we'd be handicapping Tiger's mistresses instead of his golf game? Sports' ultimate boy scout became the tabloid gift that kept on giving when a bizarre car accident outside his home started a chain that revealed he had more side dishes than an all-you-can-eat buffet. From porn stars to waitresses, the married father-

of-two may showed that his conquests included more than the world of golf.

THIS IS WHY THEY INVENTED THE TERM

"NO COMMENT": Let's be honest — when you expect sage social and political commentary from a beauty contestant, you've got a problem (see Sarah Palin). But it's bizarre that Carrie Prejean's anti-gay marriage stance at a Miss USA pageant seemed to set off more fury than when the same sentiments were uttered by any of the nation's elected officials (including our president). Still, it's hard to feel sorry for Prejean, who latched on to the family values contingent, but then it was revealed that she had breast implants, nude photos and a solo sex tape. The only thing she wasn't accused of being was one of Tiger's mistresses. But give it time: The list is still growing.

MAYBE CHINA WAS

RIGHT: Sure, a one-child policy might seem a little extreme, but after watching the questionable to downright scary parenting skills of Nadya Suleman and Jon and Kate Gosselin, maybe the United States needs to follow China's lead.

All three used the celebrity of their multiple-birth children to stay in the limelight. But karma will soon catch up — in the form of multiple teenagers.

REALITY SHOW FAIL-BALLOON BOY: It's hard to blame Richard and Mayumi Heene — the parents in the infamous balloon boy hoax — for making up the ludicrous plot that their 6-year-old son was floating away in a balloon to garner attention from the press in hopes of getting a reality show. After all, if they watched "Real Housewives," "For the Love of Ray J," "The Hills" or just about any other reality show, there is so much fiction they probably thought their hoax was an appropriate audition. Instead it might get them jail time. But they're so entertaining, let's hope whatever prison they land in allows for cell cameras.

FATHER OF THE YEAR:

Even Joe Jackson would shake his head at the shenanigans of this year's winner, Jon Gosselin. The father of eight declared he was standing up for himself by breaking free from his bullying wife Kate — and then proceeded to act so shamelessly we jumped on the Team Kate bandwagon. He was linked to a young teacher BEFORE they announced their split, took up with a hard-partying twenty-something and then cheated on HER — with a tabloid reporter. He also made the most of his newfound bachelorhood by partying in Vegas (with college girls and his mom), all while trying to defend his honor as a good dad.

APOLOGY FAIL: When you've done something as heinous as attack your girlfriend, you'd better have your "I'm sorry" game on point. Chris Brown was woefully off-message with his apologies — you could almost see the "let me tell you what REALLY happened" look in his eyes. Tweeting that he still loved the woman he attacked also didn't endear him to fans. Even Ike knew when to leave Tina alone.

"YES I'M ON THE LIST"

REALLY DOES WORK: Tareq and Michelle Salahi shocked the society world — and the White House — when they managed to crash the

first state dinner of President Obama, despite a guest list that required security clearance and Secret Service screening. All we can say is — big deal. White House security has nothing on entertainment's clipboard-carrying publicists. If they manage to crash a Diddy party, then that's worth talking about.

AT LEAST WE HAVE JERMAJESTY:

We all mourned the loss this year of one of the world's most gifted artists, Michael Jackson, and here at Wacky & Tacky, his loss resonates as well — the man provided us with a wealth of material every year. Jackson's death showed us that along with his music, the craziness will also live on. The Jackson family kept his body on ice for more than two months so they could have another memorial that cost more than \$1 million, Jermaine Jackson tried to mount a tribute show to his brother that fizzled, LaToya

mugged for camera time, Jackson's dermatologist dished on his former patients and the remaining four of the five living Jackson brothers had a reality show by year's end. Can anyone say, "Off the Wall"?

CELEBRITY OF THE

YEAR: In an age where celebrities detail their bikini waxes in interviews and debut their new implants at premieres, it was refreshing to see an ungroomed, portly woman from across the Atlantic become the year's biggest sensation. Susan Boyle proved to anyone worried that talentless opportunists were taking over our entertainment world that sometimes, talent does trump looks, substance can rise above style and a voice can win out over auto-tune. But even she wasn't immune to celebrity pitfalls — she had the prerequisite nervous breakdown at the height of her success. Welcome to the club, Susan! You are now official! □

NY Film Critics name 'The Hurt Locker' best film

By **JAKE COYLE**,
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK — The Iraq war drama "The Hurt Locker" added to its award-season momentum, winning best film from the New York Film Critics Circle.

The group, which announced its selections Monday, also awarded best director to Kathryn Bigelow of "The Hurt Locker." Those choices mirrored the selections of the Los Angeles Film Critics Association, which were announced Sunday. The New York critics picked Meryl Streep for best actress for her performance in "Julie & Julia." It was her fourth award from the group.

Best actor went to George Clooney, who was chosen for "Up in the Air" and "Fantastic Mr. Fox." The latter, Wes Anderson's stop-motion animated movie, won for best animated film.

Christoph Waltz, who played a menacing Nazi in Quentin Tarantino's "Inglourious Basterds," won best supporting actor. Best actress went to Mo'Nique for her performance as the mother in "Precious."

The New York Film Critics Circle Awards are among the drumbeat of critics' prizes leading up to the Academy Awards on March 7. Oscar nominations are announced Feb. 2. Nominations for the Golden Globes, perhaps the most high profile of the earlier awards, were to be announced Tuesday by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

The early positive critical response to James Cameron's "Avatar" has recently altered the handicapping of the Oscar race. Though the NYFCC declined to give any awards to "Avatar," the New York Film Critics Online on Sunday named the movie its choice for best picture. □

BUSINESS**Aruba TODAY****Stocks rise to 2009 highs after Dubai, Exxon deals**

By SARA LEPRO,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Easing concerns about debt problems overseas and a \$31 billion takeover deal by Exxon Mobil Corp. nudged major stock indexes to new highs for the year.

The market climbed Monday following news that the Middle Eastern city-state of Abu Dhabi had extended \$10 billion to nearby Dubai to help the emirate make debt payments. Analysts have been concerned since last month that a cash crunch in the former boomtown could send ripples through global credit markets.

The market's advance was uneven after Exxon Mobil said it would acquire XTO Energy Inc. The move will help Exxon tap into the growing supply of natural gas in the U.S. and could signal that more deals are afoot in the energy industry.

A drop in shares of Exxon held the Dow Jones industrial average to more modest gains than other indexes. The Dow added 0.3 percent, while the broader Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.7 percent.

Financial stocks rose after Citigroup Inc. said it would repay the \$20 billion it received last year from the government's financial rescue program. The government also will sell its 34 percent stake in the company. The news came just days after Bank of America Corp. repaid the \$45 billion in bailout money it owed taxpayers.

The day's advance was orderly and signaled that traders remain cautious, as they have for weeks. A big run in stocks that began in March has slowed in the past month as investors look to lock in some of their gains from 2009 and determine how to position themselves for the new year. The Standard & Poor's 500

index is up 1.7 percent so far this month, after a 5.7 percent gain in November and a 64.7 percent jump since early March.

"Most people, for the most part, have wrapped up the year," said Blaze Tankersley, chief market strategist at brokerage Bay Crest Partners. The Dow rose 29.55, or 0.3 percent, to 10,501.05, its highest close since Oct. 1, 2008. The S&P 500 index rose 7.70, or 0.7 percent, to 1,114.11, its highest finish since Oct. 2, 2008.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 21.79, or 1 percent, to 2,212.10.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note edged up to 3.56 percent from 3.55 percent late Friday as prices fell.

The dollar fell against other currencies, helping to lift most commodities prices. Commodities are priced in

dollars and become cheaper for foreign buyers when the greenback falls.

Gold rose, while oil fell 36 cents to settle at \$69.51 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Analysts said stocks are likely to drift as investors await comments about the economy and interest rates from the Federal Reserve, which wraps up its last policy meeting of the year on Wednesday.

Investors expect the central bank to keep its benchmark interest rate at a historic low level of near zero. But there is some concern that rates could rise sooner than previously thought as the economy improves.

"People simply want to know if we are going to keep this low-interest-rate environment," said Michael Feser, president of Zecco Trading in Pasadena, Calif. "That has really been fuel for this market."



FILE - In this Jan. 16, 2009 file photo, Citigroup headquarters is seen in New York. Citigroup Inc. said Monday, Dec. 14, 2009, it is repaying \$20 billion in bailout money it received from the Treasury Department, in an effort to reduce government influence over the banking giant.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew, file)

BY STEPHEN BERNARD,
AP Business Writer
NEW YORK — Citigroup said Monday it is repaying \$20 billion in public bailout

Citigroup to repay \$20 billion in bailout money

money, freeing the banking giant from the close scrutiny and pay restrictions that came with the rescue program. The government also will sell its one-third stake in the company. Paying back the government gives an immediate lift to Citigroup's reputation and will save the bank \$1.7 billion a year in dividend payments, but it comes at a heavy cost. Raising the new capital will significantly dilute current shareholders' stake in the company, and Citi's shares fell more than 6 percent.

By approving the repayment, the government is saying Citi is on strong enough financial footing to stand on its own. It's a far cry from the situation at the beginning of the year, when some analysts were saying Citi could fail completely and be taken over by the government.

"It gets rid of the stigma,"



FILE - In this Nov. 27, 2009 file photo, traders move about the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York shortly before the opening bell. Stocks edged higher Monday, Dec. 14, 2009, after a bailout of the troubled emirate of Dubai helped allay concerns that another wave of global credit problems might be on the way.

(AP Photo/Peter Morgan, File)

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 9.42, or 1.6 percent, to 609.79.

Three stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 1.1 billion shares compared with 1 billion

Friday.

Britain's FTSE 100 rose 1 percent, Germany's DAX index rose 0.8 percent, and France's CAC-40 gained 0.7 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock average fell less than 0.1 percent. □

FBR Capital Markets analyst Paul Miller said. Citigroup Inc. was among the hardest hit by the credit crisis and rising loan defaults, and received one of the largest bailouts of any bank during the financial crisis. The government gave Citi \$45 billion in loans and agreed to protect losses on nearly \$300 billion in risky investments.

Freed from the bailout program, Citi will now turn its attention to shedding the rest of its troubled mortgage portfolio and other risky assets, which it had separated from its traditional banking business in January. At the same time, the bank is trying to build up those core businesses such as securities underwriting and institutional banking, where it faces heavy competition from JPMorgan Chase & Co. and other banks that suffered less during the financial crisis. The bank also wants to build up its

consumer banking business, which trails competitors like Bank of America Corp. in size. Miller said the repayment of TARP will have the most immediate effect on the institutional business, where Citi will no longer face compensation restrictions. Those pay constraints were keeping Citi from keeping top bankers who were being lured to competitors who didn't face similar limits, Miller said.

The repayment plan comes just days after Bank of America said it would pay back the \$45 billion in bailout money it had received. San Francisco-based Wells Fargo & Co. is now the last national bank that has yet to pay back its bailout money. Most other major commercial and investment banks including JPMorgan, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs have already repaid the government. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

AP source: Phillies have tentative deal for Halladay



In this Sept. 30, 2009 photo, Toronto Blue Jays starter Roy Halladay throws a first to get Boston Red Sox's Joey Gathright on a grounder to the mound during the first inning of a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston. Halladay was in Philadelphia on Monday, Dec. 14, 2009, to take a physical for the Phillies, according to a person with knowledge of the situation, a necessary step before the teams complete a potential blockbuster trade involving the former Cy Young Award winner. The person spoke Monday on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press because the teams had not made any announcement.

Associated Press

By ROB MAADDI
AP Sports Writer

The Phillies have a tentative agreement to acquire star pitcher Roy Halladay in a trade with Toronto, and the former Cy Young Award winner was in Philadelphia on Monday for a physical required to complete the deal. Philadelphia also is discussing a trade that would send Cliff Lee, another former Cy Young winner, to the Seattle Mariners. The commissioner's office granted a 72-hour window on Sunday for Toronto and Philadelphia to complete their trade, a baseball official familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press on Monday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because Major League Baseball didn't make any announcement. Halladay took a physical on

Monday for the NL champion Phillies, another person with knowledge of the situation said, also on condition of anonymity because no announcement had been made. Philadelphia could give up pitchers J.A. Happ, Joe Blanton and outfielder Dominic Brown as part of a deal, the person said. Those three players also took physicals in Philadelphia on Monday. Halladay's agent, Greg Landry, was registered at a Philadelphia hotel, a sign the sides were working on a contract extension, which likely would be necessary before Halladay waives his right to block a trade. Lee, who like Halladay is eligible for free agency after next season, could wind up going to Seattle, the baseball official said. The 32-year-old Halladay is the most prized pitcher

on the trade market. A six-time All-Star and the 2003 AL Cy Young Award winner, the right-hander went 17-10 with a 2.79 ERA for the Blue Jays last season. He led the majors with four shutouts and nine complete games while throwing 239 innings, second to Detroit's Justin Verlander (240). Halladay would be a huge addition for the aggressive Phillies, who won the 2008 World Series and repeated as NL champs this year, when they lost the World Series to the New York Yankees in six games. The Phillies are thought to be

a preferable fit for Halladay because they hold spring training in Clearwater, Fla., near his offseason home. Aware they probably couldn't afford to keep Halladay beyond next season, the Blue Jays shopped their ace before the July 31 trade deadline. The Phillies were thought to be involved in talks involving Halladay at that point, but instead they landed Lee from the Cleveland Indians for four minor leaguers. Lee was a big reason Philadelphia won its second consecutive pennant, going 4-0 with a 1.56 ERA and two complete games in five

postseason starts. The Blue Jays fired general manager J.P. Ricciardi late in the season and replaced him with Alex Anthopoulos. When contacted Monday by the AP, Anthopoulos declined comment. The Phillies have been busy this offseason, signing free-agent third baseman Placido Polanco to an \$18 million, three-year contract. They also signed Brian Schneider to be their backup catcher, and reserve infielder Juan Castro. Halladay has been one of baseball's best pitchers for years. He owns a 148-76 career record with a 3.43 ERA. □

Adelman rips league for 'ridiculous' schedule



Houston Rockets coach Rick Adelman shouts from the bench during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Oklahoma City Thunder in Oklahoma City, Sunday, Nov. 29, 2009. Houston won 100-91.

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Houston Rockets coach Rick Adelman criticized the NBA on Monday for setting up an "utterly ridiculous" schedule for his team that includes four back-to-back games over the next two weeks. The Rockets face Detroit at home on Tuesday, then must fly to Denver to play the first-place Nuggets on Wednesday. They visit Dallas on Friday and return home to face Oklahoma City on Saturday — then have to play two games on

consecutive nights twice more during Christmas week. "We have a horrendous stretch here," Adelman said. "I don't know if the league really understands that they gave us four straight back-to-backs. It's awful." NBA spokesman Tim Frank said in an e-mail that the league had no comment on Adelman's statements. Houston plays the Los Angeles Clippers at home on Dec. 22 and Orlando on the road on Dec. 23, followed by road

games against New Jersey (Dec. 26) and Cleveland (Dec. 27). "It's utterly ridiculous," Adelman said. "But that's the schedule we have, it's just the way it is and we're just going to have to respond to it." Adelman said the schedule gives his team little time to practice, and even less time to spend with their families for the holiday. "Every team should have a chance where they're home a little bit," he said. "We have no chance. This is the most ridiculous schedule I've ever seen." The Rockets are 5-0 in the second games of back-to-backs this season, but 1-4 in the first games. They have 10 road games in December, but by the All-Star break, they will have played 26 road games and 25 at home. □



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TV networks already know about life without Tiger

RACHEL COHEN

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The television networks already know what life without Tiger Woods looks like, and they were going to take that knowledge into their upcoming negotiations for the next contract with the PGA Tour.

The tour's six-year deals with CBS and NBC expire in 2012, and negotiations are expected to begin late next year.

Knee surgery sidelined Woods for eight months after his stirring win at the 2008 U.S. Open, slicing television ratings in half while he was gone. Now Woods is taking an indefinite leave from golf after admitting to marital infidelity.

During the last round of negotiations, NBC focused on securing rights to tournaments that Woods was likely to play, said former MAGNA research chief Steve Sternberg.

But even before a stream of



Copies of a newsmagazine featuring cover photos and stories regarding U.S. golfer Tiger Woods are seen at a news agent at London's Heathrow airport, Monday, Dec. 14, 2009. Consulting firm Accenture ended its association with Tiger Woods on Sunday, marking the first major sponsor to cut ties altogether with the golfer since his alleged infidelities surfaced and he announced an indefinite leave from the sport to work on his marriage.

Associated Press

sordid allegations led Woods to step away from the game, the networks had received a harsh reminder that the lofty ratings they receive when he's in contention aren't assured.

"The television business is about guaranteeing ratings to advertisers," said analyst Larry Gerbrandt, a principal of Media Valuation Partners.

The networks sell ads based on a promise of a certain rating. They can't afford to be frequently caught in the position of needing to make up for ratings that fall short, Gerbrandt said. Networks know how high ratings would be if Woods is in contention, but they can't base their rates on the assumption that he will be.

"You can't run a business that way," Gerbrandt said.

The networks must decide how much money they're willing to pay the PGA Tour based on how much money they believe they can make from advertisers.

"The negotiation to some extent is based on a worst-case scenario," Gerbrandt said.

By the time the negotiations start, the networks might have a better sense of the scenario, good or bad. If Woods has already returned to the tour, they'll be able to gauge the effect of the scandal on ratings and his level of play. The longer he stays out, the more uncertainty will permeate the negotiations.

"If Tiger returns to golf and performs well, ratings will remain high," Sternberg wrote in an e-mail. "But if he is not back yet, it will definitely impact how much the networks will be willing to pay."

CBS and NBC declined comment. □

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Belichick says he has a lot of respect for Moss

By HOWARD ULMAN

AP Sports Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — New England coach Bill Belichick fired back Monday at two Carolina defenders who criticized the effort of wide receiver Randy Moss. Belichick, who rarely rips opponents, said, "My response would be that's a lot of conversation coming from a team that just lost another game."

After Moss had just one catch for 16 yards in the Patriots' 20-10 win over the Panthers on Sunday, cornerback Chris Gamble and safety Chris Harris said Moss, who had a reputation for going less than full speed with Minnesota and Oakland when those teams struggled, didn't go all out during the game.

"We knew he was going to shut it down," Gamble told the Boston Globe. "He'd just give up a lot, slow down, he's not going deep, not trying to run a route. You can tell (by his) body language."

"That's what it is with him," Harris said. "You get physical with him, and I don't want to say he quits, but he kind of doesn't run the routes the way they're supposed to be run. If you get a jam on him, he'll just ease up."

Belichick and quarterback

Tom Brady came to the defense of the receiver who had 98 receptions in 2007 when he set an NFL record with 23 touchdown catches. The Patriots were 18-0 that season before losing the Super Bowl. Moss added 69 catches last season when they went 11-5.

Moss has 69 catches for 1,074 yards and nine touchdowns this season but just six for 149 yards and one touchdown in his past three games.

"I have a lot of respect for Randy. I think he's one of our best players," Belichick said. "If you watch other teams defend him, watch other teams play against him, they think the same way, other than these two guys from Carolina after they lost another game. I guess they don't think that way, but they haven't won a lot of games now."

The Patriots (8-5) didn't go ahead of the Panthers (5-8) until Brady threw a 5-yard touchdown pass to Benjamin Watson with 1:06 left in the third quarter. The double-teaming Moss gets has forced Brady to throw elsewhere, and Wes Welker leads the NFL with 105 catches.

Late in the first quarter, Moss didn't break sharply toward the sideline and Gamble intercepted Brady's pass.

"Randy saw something. He went to the place he thought the ball would be," Brady said during his regular Monday appearance on WEEI radio. "I don't think you can blame Randy for that."

And Brady took his own shot at Gamble.

"I've seen plays made on Chris Gamble over the course of the season, too," he said. "Guys, when they play Randy, want to show what they can do. ... but Randy's one of the best players in the history of the NFL."

The Panthers steered clear of the issue on Monday.

"Who cares?" Harris said of Belichick's comments.

Carolina coach John Fox said, "That's not my job to evaluate (Moss). They won."

Gamble didn't appear in the locker room Monday while reporters were allowed inside.

On Wednesday, Moss and three teammates were sent home by Belichick after they reported late for a team meeting on a snowy morning when traffic was tied up.

The only pass Moss caught Sunday was a 16-yarder over the middle on the first play of the second quarter. But he fumbled when Harris hit him and Dan Connor recovered for the Panthers.



New England Patriots wide receiver Randy Moss (81) loses control of the ball as he is pressured by Carolina Panthers cornerback Chris Gamble (20) and Panthers linebacker Jon Beason (52) in the first half of an NFL football game in Foxborough, Mass., Sunday, Dec. 13, 2009.

Associated Press

Midway through the fourth quarter, Moss dropped a pass while being guarded only by Gamble, and the Patriots settled for a field goal. Later, his false start penalty gave the Patriots a third-and-13 which they didn't convert. But a roughing the kicker call extended the drive that ended in another field goal.

Moss spent seven years with the Vikings and two with the Raiders. He had career-lows of 42 catches for 553 yards in Oakland in 2006 and expressed a desire to be traded.

"Maybe (it's) because I'm unhappy and I'm not too much excited about what's going on," he said in November 2006, "so my concentration and focus level tends to go down sometimes when I'm in a bad mood. So all I can say is if you put me in a good situation and make me happy, man, you get good results." Moss played well last season despite the absence of Brady,

who suffered a season-ending knee injury in the opener. He had at least 116 yards receiving in five of his first nine games this year with the Patriots going 6-3. But they lost two of the next three before his tardiness last Wednesday.

Welker was the primary receiver Sunday, catching 10 passes for 105 yards. Brady said that Moss was frustrated during the game but that "you've just got to keep fighting." At one point, he was seen talking animatedly to Moss, who was on the bench. "You don't need to do it with Wes very much," Brady said on WEEI. "He's unbelievable."

So does Moss have to be reminded that he can't get frustrated when he's double teamed and can't have a game with only one catch?

"You know how I feel about stats," Belichick said. "Stats are for losers. Final scores are for winners." □



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Kansas, Texas still hold top two spots in AP Top 25



Kansas' Xavier Henry, left, puts up a shot past La Salle's Kimmani Barrett during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game on Saturday, Dec. 12, 2009, in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

By JIM O'CONNELL

AP Basketball Writer

Kansas was the runaway No. 1 pick in The Associated Press' college basketball poll Monday, just as it has been each week since the season began last month.

Kansas State and New Mexico entered the rankings this week. The Wildcats joined the poll for the first time since the 2007-08 season, a drought dwarfed by the Lobos, whose previous appearance in the Top 25 was in March 1999.

The Jayhawks (9-0), who easily beat Radford and La Salle last week, received 61 first-place votes from the national media panel and were well ahead of Texas (8-0), which received one first-place vote and was No. 2 for the third straight week.

Kentucky (10-0), which was No. 1 on one ballot, and Purdue (9-0) both moved up

one spot to third and fourth, following Villanova's 75-65 loss to Temple on Sunday. The Wildcats (9-1) dropped to eighth.

Syracuse (10-0), which beat Florida last week for its third win over a ranked team this season, received the other two first-place votes and jumped from seventh to fifth.

West Virginia remained sixth and was followed by Duke, Villanova, Tennessee and North Carolina.

Georgetown, which beat Top 25 teams Butler and Washington last week, moved up four places to 11th, followed by Michigan State, Florida, Connecticut, Gonzaga, Texas Tech, Kansas State, Ohio State, New Mexico and Mississippi.

The bottom five ranked teams were Butler, Georgia Tech, Texas A&M, Washington and Cincinnati.

Kansas State (9-1) moved in at 17th following a 95-80 victory over UNLV on Saturday, its sixth straight win since an 86-74 loss to Mississippi in the semifinals of the Puerto Rico Tip-Off. The Wildcats were ranked for eight weeks in 2007-08, Michael Beasley's only season in Manhattan before leaving for the NBA.

New Mexico (10-0) kept its unbeaten season going with an 84-81 victory over Texas A&M in Houston on Saturday. The Lobos have shown steady improvement under third-year coach Steve Alford, who led them to the Mountain West Conference regular-season title last season.

This is their first appearance in the Top 25 since a three-season run under coach Dave Bliss that ended with the final poll of 1998-99.

UNLV (7-1) was ranked for two weeks before falling out from 18th after the loss to Kansas State. Wisconsin (7-2) moved into the poll last week after handing Duke its first loss of the season in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge. But the Badgers were gone this week after following the victory over the Blue Devils with an 88-84 overtime loss to Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Texas Tech, which beat Texas Christian 80-70 in its only game last week, had the biggest jump, moving from 23rd to 16th.

Texas A&M, which beat North Texas 75-65 before losing to New Mexico, and Washington, which lost 74-66 to Georgetown in the Wooden Classic, both fell seven places, to 23rd and 24th, respectively.

The only games between ranked teams this week are Saturday at neutral sites: Gonzaga plays Duke at Madison Square Garden, and North Carolina faces Texas at Cowboys Stadium. □

Phelps win again, takes 200 fly in Annapolis

giving the 14-time Olympic champion five first-place finishes in five events at the three-day North Baltimore Aquatic Center's Christmas meet at the U.S. Naval Academy.

Phelps, swimming for the host NBAC, finished in 1 minute, 42.29 seconds, nearly 3 seconds ahead of Todd Patrick. "I'm not where I need to be in terms of my fitness, but then I knew coming in that I have a lot to do to be in the best shape to swim the times I want to swim. But this was a stepping stone to that," Phelps said. "I swam three-quarters of two real good 200s (in the freestyle and butterfly) and in the 400 IM, I was happy with that."

During the meet's first two days, Phelps won the 100 backstroke, 100 butterfly, 200 freestyle and 400 individual medley. He had also been scheduled to swim in the 100 freestyle on Sunday and swam it in preliminaries, but skipped the final to concentrate on the 200 fly. The two events were 22 minutes apart.

Phelps said he will compete next with the

U.S. team in this weekend's Duel in the Pool short-course meet in Manchester, England, against an international team of swimmers from England, Germany and Italy. After that, he plans to train for three weeks at the Olympic training center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. More than 600 swimmers from age 10 and up competed in the GBAC meet, in its 36th year. Phelps had competed here many times as a youth and teenager, but last swam in the NBAC event in 2004. Phelps, who had a subpar performance last month in World Cup meets in Berlin and Stockholm, grew up competing in the youth-based NBAC meet, so he felt it was a good site for a training swim after a period of about six weeks when he took a lull from his normally intense regimen.

"We accomplished everything we came here to do, especially in seeing where he is in his short-course swims in relation to his best times," said Phelps' coach, Bob Bowman. "This meet showed he needs to be in better shape." □



Young swimmers look to Michael Phelps, lower right, before he competed in the boys' open 200-yard freestyle and the boys' open 100-yard butterfly swimming events at the North Baltimore Aquatic Club Invitational Meet, Friday, Dec. 11, 2009, at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Maryland (AP) — Michael Phelps won the 200-yard butterfly Sunday,

Ing. Edson Jacobs MBA MIM has graduated



ORANJESTAD - Caribbean Academy of Business (CAoB) has delivered the first Master Graduate in the Master of Information Management Study within 2 years since the Master Study started in September 2007.

Page B5

Westin guests enjoy fashion by the pool



PALM BEACH - On Friday and Sunday afternoons, guests of The Westin Resort, Aruba enjoyed a poolside fashion show, where New York designer Imani Alexander showcased her Ceola Holiday 2010 collection.

Page B9

First wave of "Swine Flu" vaccinations to end Friday



Dr. Salazar, Department of Health

ORANJESTAD - Health officials announced yesterday morning that Friday, December 18 will be the last opportunity for island residents to obtain their free H1N1 Flu virus vaccinations until the program



Minister of Justice and Education Arthur Dowers

continues with the second wave of vaccinations beginning well in the middle of January. Head Epidemiologist Maribelle Tromp reminded the public that Aruba has obtained 35,000 doses of H1N1 virus

immunizations, but only 1367 individuals have taken advantage of the free vaccinations being offered daily until December 18.

Continued on Page B3

AHATA views 2010 as a significant year for a new direction in tourism

ORANJESTAD - AHATA President & CEO Jim Hepple foresees necessary actions to boost both demand and revenue per room (revpar) in order to stay on track toward a recovery in Aruba's tourism industry. At AHATA's second General Assembly of Members for 2009, held at the Westin this past Friday, the newly-appointed President and CEO outlined strategies for the coming year, in order to contribute to Aruba's tourism growth in an environment where economic concerns still loom large. Actions taken at the General Assembly also included the election of the new board for 2010.

Continued on Page B4



AHATA 2010 Board

The Sunset Grille is Aruba's premier traditional steakhouse!



Palm Beach – The Sunset Grille at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa needs no introduction. The award winning American steakhouse with its chic, cosmopolitan atmosphere headlines Prime Beef, the highest grade USDA -- only 2% of all beef is graded prime, required to age a minimum of 4 weeks.

The restaurant also features Certified Angus Beef, specialty selected highly marbled USDA and premium never-frozen seafood.

While steaks and chops make

up the heart of the menu, the resort's Executive Chef Hector Espinoza and restaurant Chef Johnny Farro innovated unparalleled appetizers and extraordinary desserts, which helped the Sunset Grille achieve AAA's elite four-diamond status – a rare feat for steakhouses.

Chef Farro is now the dedicated restaurant chef, delivering over 20 years of restaurant experience to the already legendary culinary team

When asked to suggest a

perfect dinner combination, Chef Farro does not hesitate and order the Chop House Martini Salad, with Romaine Lettuce, Hearts of Palm, Sliced Egg, Tomatoes, Blue Cheese, Bacon, Sweet Pepper and creamy Chopin Vodka dressing, served “Shaken not Stirred;” the Lobster Bisque baked with a Crispy Pastry Crust and flavored with a touch of cognac, and the popular Rack of Lamb featuring Four Double Cut Chops, with Mint Pesto, Roasted Tomatoes and Onion Confit.



The latest restaurant's menu revision included the introduction of some interesting dishes such as Tuna Tataki, Sesame Rice Cracker crusted Tuna served rare with Thai Chili and Ginger; Roasted Loin Veal Chop, Apple Chutney, Maple Balsamic Glaze with a Garlic & Spinach Custard and Asia Style Salmon & Scallops, escorted by wakame salad and served over soba noodles.

The Sunset Grille always endeavors to exceed guests' expectations by purchasing the very best products available and

preparing them in accordance with a combination of “tried and true” as well as cutting edge contemporary methods, Espinoza explains.

Simply put, the Sunset Grille culinary team buys the best products, and cooks them the best way they know, refusing to cut corners, especially when it comes to buying, aging and cutting meat. No wonder the readers of Caribbean Travel & Life named it the top restaurant in the Caribbean.

Open for dinner from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. every night, indoor and outdoor seating. □

Fun Island Living, at T.H. Palm & Company



Palm Beach -- The beautiful T.H. Palm & Company offers an exceptional, upscale shopping experience aptly described as “Fun Island Living.”

Owned by long time Aruba resident Jodi Tobman who has several other boutiques on the island, Jodi reports she had a lot of fun creating this magnificent jewel of a boutique which first opened its doors in June of 2004.

A wide variety of distinctive items

are on display on interesting antique décor pieces, from luscious silk tropical shirts for men to stylish resort wear and exclusive artisan jewelry for women. The theme of “Fun Island Living” is apparent in the wide selection of accessories for home including tropical barware and serving pieces, books, artwork and lamps. There are handbags “to live for” and an array of gifts for children of all ages as well as a variety of novelty gift items for pets.

When visiting T.H. Palm & Company, we suggest you take your time as you will need to browse from floor to ceiling in order not to miss anything. Larger items can be shipped to your home address at a nominal fee and shipping is always an available option.

For those who find it hard to choose from among all the enchanting objects in stock or for those who do

not have time to shop, a Personal Shopper service is available to assist at no extra charge, by appointment, please.

T.H. Palm & Company is conveniently located in front of the Playa Linda Beach Resort and offers late night shopping and convenient parking. Open daily from 9 a.m. - 10 p.m. Fridays open until 11 p.m. Telephone +297 586 8909. Email: orders@salamanderholdings.com □

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First wave of "Swine Flu" vaccinations to end Friday



Continued from Page B1

Today and tomorrow, Wednesday, December 16 will be the last time the shots will be offered at three locations in the late afternoon and evening, to accommodate most working schedules, announced Sharlene Koolman of the Department of Contagious Diseases. During the hours from 3:00 PM until 7:00 PM, teams from various health agencies will be immunizing those qualified at EPB San Nicolas, EPB Hato in Oranjestad, and Centro Kibrahacha for the Elderly, in Piedra Plat. Vaccinations can also be obtained at their central headquarters in Oranjestad, where the old hospital was located, and will be administered daily from 8:00 AM until Noon through Friday, December 18. After that date, all departments will be closed until mid-January. Dr. Salazar of the Department of Health reminded the public that particular risk groups must be immunized, such as children ages 6 months to 5 years and those who suffer with chronic health conditions, particularly respiratory diseases, such as asthma. They do not recommend the vaccine for infants under six months, but strongly urge families with young babies or those living with someone in a high risk groups, make sure to get immunized against the H1N1 virus, because if they contract it, they could spread it to family members who are at greatest risk.

It is essential for domestics,



individuals in the food industry, health workers and caregivers to be immunized against the virus.

Maribelle Tromp admitted that Aruba has had reports of 850 patients with flu symptoms, of which 63 cases of H1N1 were confirmed. Among those, 8 cases required hospitalization; they were all patients with existing chronic conditions. Aruba has seen no fatalities due to H1N1.

Minister of Justice and Education Arthur Dowers also urged islanders to avail themselves of the vaccination service before the holidays on behalf of the government. School age children are in an environment where the disease can easily spread and then effect rest of their family. Aruba also has over one million visitors a year, and



now, during flu season, anyone could come in contact with the H1N1 virus and pass it on to their entire household.

A program in collaboration with all family practitioners in Aruba is now also being instigated to acquire lists of patients they consider to be high-risk for the H1N1 flu virus, and who should be vaccinated without delay, report health officials. A second phase of vaccinations will take place beginning

in January, as the vaccine is most effective in two doses. "The first immunizations offer about 80% efficiency," stated Maribelle Tromp, "with the second shot the recipient should have 100% immunity."

Individuals with conditions that do not allow them to come in for the vaccine can call 582-4221 to explain their situation, and health department officials will visit them at their home, if it is deemed necessary. The same number can be called



for more information about the vaccination program. □

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AHATA views 2010 as a significant year for a new direction in tourism



AHATA President & CEO Jim Hepple, center, with GA Guest Speaker Adam Sacks, second from left, and AHATA Staff

Continued from Page B1

Hepple commented that decreases in tourist arrivals to Aruba so far in 2009 were only 4%, but of much greater concern was the profound effect in the fall in the hotel's revpar, which was much steeper. With a decline in revpar projected to continue in 2010, Hepple urged 'focus' in efforts to stem discounting of rates while still driving more business to the island.

The context in which Aruba now finds itself was echoed by Guest Speaker Adam Sacks, the founder and managing director of Oxford Economics'

Tourism Economics Division, who spoke on the economy and travel trends. Although he notes that Caribbean tourism is outperforming much of the world, he recognizes that Aruba hotels are struggling nonetheless. He sees a possible turn-around with economic indicators looking positive for 2010 in Aruba's main market of the US.

However, AHATA President & CEO Jim Hepple clarifies that it is not a given that Aruba's tourism will bounce back to numbers it enjoyed previous to the economic crisis. "We have

to be savvy to recognize the extent of the global economic concerns, repositioning our efforts accordingly, and to work closely with the new government so that policies affecting tourism are effective in supporting product investment, business growth of resorts and other tourism-related businesses and growing the economy," he comments.

In this, he reinforced adherence to AHATA's mission, "to achieve sustainable growth for the Aruba tourism industry", while working as the private sector marketing advocate for the Aruba tourism industry



AHATA GA Jim Hepple

as well as the public policy lobbyist for its membership, channeling the collective strength of AHATA to forward Aruba's industry's interests. Efforts of the 2010 year will be guided by the new AHATA Board, which will be officially installed this coming February and composed of:

Chairperson Alex Nieuwmeyer of Divi Resorts, First Vice-Chair Paul Gielen from the Renaissance, Second Vice Chair Warren Stanley of De Palm Tours, Treasurer Javier

Wolter from CMB, Secretary Edgar Roelofs of the Manchebo Beach Resort, Director Susan Santiago of the Hyatt Regency Aruba, Director Richard Roy of The Westin Resort, Director Louis Philippe of the Holiday Inn Resort, Director Jesus Cardoso of the Occidental Grand, Director Rob Smith of the Radisson Aruba Resort, Director Joe Najjar of La Cabana and Director Ewald Biemans of Bucuti/Tara Beach. □

Got sand...Play Beach tennis!

Beach tennis event finals this Sunday December 20



EAGLE BEACH - The last in a serie of 12 tournaments in 2009 ends this Sunday with a spectacular Beach tennis event! This will be the

last chance to add points to there total or play this fastest growing sport on the island this year.

The event will attract the

regular locals as well as players from Curacao were beach tennis started a couple months ago. Also tourist who want to try the sport are participating in this FUN event.

Every body can play this cool sport!

There will be lots of food from the grill and cold beverages to keep the spectators and players going. DJ Raymond who 'spinned' a fabulous after party during the last Beach tennis event with 200 people dancing on the beach for hours will entertain the crowd during the day with his beats. Program: Sunday December 20, Eagle beach. Youth tournament 10-12 am.



Adult tournament 12 - 7 pm. Register and more information at www.arubabeachtennis.com or call 5926421.

Beach Tennis Aruba is powered

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Caribbean Academy of Business / CompuLearn acknowledge 1st Master Graduate

Ing. Edson Jacobs MBA MIM has graduated

In cooperation with Markus Verbeek Business Academy in the Netherlands



ORANJESTAD - Caribbean Academy of Business (CAoB) has delivered the first Master Graduate in the Master of Information Management Study within 2 years since the Master Study started in September 2007. The CAoB is very pleased with this great result and the entire CAoB team congratulates him with this achievement. Also the other students in the same Master Student group are in the process of finishing their Master Study in Information Management and General Management. They are Fred

de Jong, Earnie Pannefle, Micheline Tromp, Kennrick Williams and Shamilla Williams.

To be able to follow a Master study like this, students need to have a Bachelor Degree and three years of working experience in the area of their study.

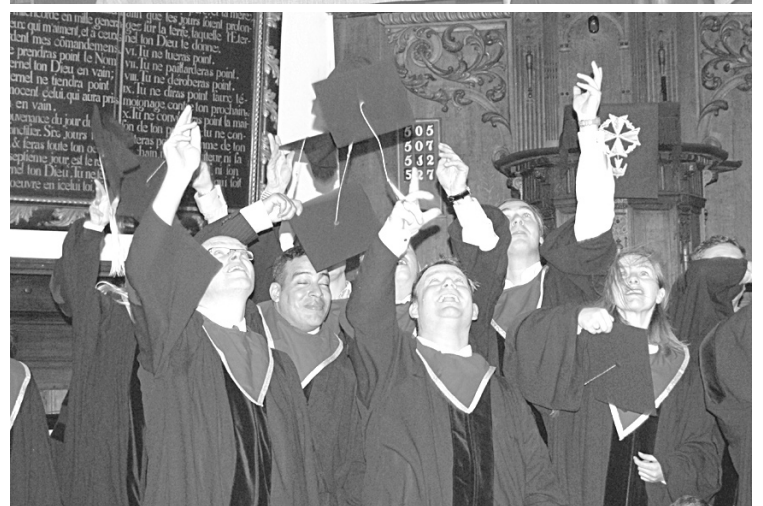
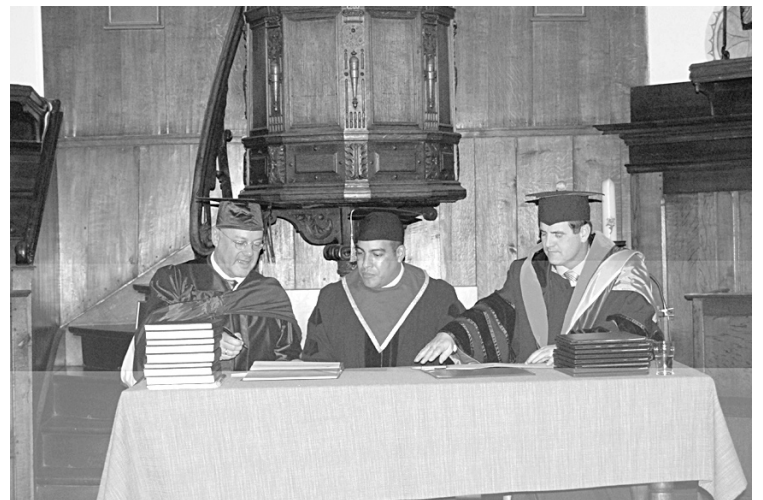
The possible Master studies at this moment at CAoB are Information Management, General Management, Project Management, Finance & Control and Mediation.

Shown on photos: Prof. Coos van Tuinen Ph.D., Ing. Edson

Jacobs MBA MIM and Prof. Jan van Zwieten RI/RA/RO and Dutch Graduates .

Accreditation

CAoB has NVAO accredited part-time studies Bachelor and Master Degree Business Administration with several Management Specializations available and workshops and seminars for Organizational Development and Management Development. For Bachelor and Master Studies the Dutch partners are "Hogeschool NOVI", "Stichting Deeltijd Opleidingen", "Hogeschool MiddenNederland", "Newport Business Academy" and "Markus Verbeek Business Academy". NVAO (in Dutch: Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie) is the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders. The organization was established by international treaty and it ensures the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders. Students attend classes in the



evenings and weekends while Bachelor Study Group (3 years) on Jan 5th 2010 and working as professionals or executives during daytime. a Caribbean Academy of CAoB is starting a new Business. □

Succulent Steaks at Tango Argentine Grill

Susanne & Chuck love Tango Restaurant



PALM BEACH – Everyone loves the delicious flavors from one of Aruba's most popular Argentinean restaurants. Distinguished guests of Aruba Susanne and Chuck from Ohio love Tango Argentine Grill,

where superb steak is not just a meal but an art form! Once you dine at the TANGO, Aruba's first-class Parilla, you will know that Argentine Beef is Simply the Best. Each night the Award - winning Chef

is grilling only the very finest cuts of Beef on an authentic Parilla Charcoal Grill. Flavorful Argentine Steaks are Extraordinary and famed the World over. Delicious and juicy cuts of mouth-watering steaks are joined by hearty side dishes with a typical Argentine Chimichurri Herb Sauce to discernibly compliment your Steak. All this is offered up by top-notch servers who take all twenty impressive cuts of their beef seriously.

Because no Parilla is complete without a magnificent bottle of red wine, your server can recommend a spectacular choice from the extensive



wine list. And speaking of Sizzle, the Succulent Steaks aren't the only things that sizzle nightly. The Tango Argentine Parilla hosts Live

Music where the ambiance is hotter than ever. Tango Argentine Grill is located in ARAWAK GARDENS in the high rise hotel section. □

HUMAN HINTS

Intense Emotion

I know how real this all feels, I'm in a physical body too. When I talk about techniques to help transcend the physical, I know how hard it is to actually put into practice in your life. It can be hard as in, "It's hard to lift a million pound rock." I know it can seem impossible in the moment.

We're just starting to become a tiny bit aware of our selves. Our eyes are just beginning to develop, and we are just learning to discern the faintest of

unformed shadows. The more we stay aware of our selves in the moment, the more our awareness will grow and the clearer our vision will become.

Start by becoming aware of your self, then it will be easier to take action to change. As you become aware of yourself, you will see yourself repeating the same patterns over and over, until you get bored and frustrated and change your patterns.

We have an infinite ability to justify our own actions by believing that we are acting for the greater good. Even when we are aware of our bad behavior, as we usually are, we seem powerless to stop it, change it, or alter it in any way. Not to mention, those old, self-destructive patterns can feel so good!

We all know how intense Human Life can get, and we all want a cure from our own emotional affliction. We seek an elixir, a magical chant, a nugget of knowledge that will free us from the curse of extreme emotion, but that is missing the point. That is seeking the easy way out. Intense Emotion is the whole point of being in a Human Body. If you escape your emotion, you escape the point of your life.

When life gets intense, remember that the intensity is the whole point of you expressing on Earth. Your spirit is in a Human Body because the limitation, the helplessness, the desperation, the sensation that you might cease to exist, is so real. The intensity of

being in a Human Body is coveted throughout all energetic expressions. If it wasn't so intense, it wouldn't be so valuable and sought-after.

Humans transform one tiny day at a time. We usually can't see a difference in our selves on a daily basis, but over time we can change dramatically. Becoming enlightened doesn't mean rising above your emotions, it means becoming aware of your self through your emotions. Enlightenment means using your emotions to focus the energy they generate inside your body, toward a specific goal. Your emotions generate energy inside you. You can find a way to focus that energy into the physical world.

Your emotions tell you about your self. Use them to increase your own self-awareness. They generate powerful forces inside of you which you can use to empower your self and your physical manifestations. If you constructively focus and align your emotional forces into the physical world, they will give you direction, tenacity and

courage.


Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.


~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: 4:45 matinee: 12:15	late show:	
R	PRECIOUS	daily: 7:00 matinee:	9:30 late show: 12:00	
R	NINJA ASSASSIN	daily: 4:00 matinee: 1:30	6:30 late show: 8:45 11:00	
PG	OLD DOGS	daily: 4:15 matinee: 12:15	6:15 2:15 8:15 late show: 10:15 12:15	
PG-13	2012	daily: 4:15 matinee: 12:45	7:45 late show: 11:15	
PG-13	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: 6:00 matinee: 12:15	9:00 late show: 11:45	

AT PASEO HERENCIA

R	KOMT EEN VROUW BIJ DE DOKTER	daily: 7:00 matinee:	9:30 late show: 12:00	NEW
PG	ARMORED	daily: 5:30 matinee: 1:00	7:45 late show: 9:45 12:00	NEW
PG-13	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: 5:45 matinee: 12:00	8:45 late show: 11:45	
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: 4:45 matinee: 12:15	late show:	
PG-13	2012	daily: 4:30 matinee: 1:00	8:00 late show: 11:30	
PG-13	A CHRISTMAS CAROL 3D	daily: 4:45 matinee: 12:15	late show:	
PG-13	EVERYBODY'S FINE	daily: 4:30 matinee: 12:00	6:45 late show: 9:00 11:15	
R	PARANORMAL ACTIVITY	daily: 7:00 matinee:	9:30 late show: 11:45	

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Fishes & More showcases the best seafood entrees

Ask about the Early Bird Menu from 4 PM to 6:30 PM



Fishes & More specialize in freshest fish and seafood on the island, and at the same time please the non-fish lovers as well. All the dishes are prepared a la minute by an internationally experienced kitchen team, which gives the twist to the fabulous dishes. Influences from all over

the world are found back on the menu and they are already well known for the daily changing specials. If you have a large party, or if there is anything you feel like in particular, Fishes & More can always arrange to have your dinner cooked just for you, as they work

only with fresh and honest products!

Ideally located in front of the Occidental Resort (Former Allegro), they are visited both by individuals and families alike, as they have a super kids menu, so they can enjoy their dinner as much as you

will yours!

Enjoy live entertainment every night at 8PM, and even after dinner the perfect night out continues, as you can shop till you drop since the shops on our friendly

square are open until eleven. See what its like to experience real fresh dining joy with a twist!

Open from 4 pm until midnight

**For reservations call
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PALM BEACH - Red Sail Sports' catamaran will take you on an unforgettable journey: the Mexican Dinner Sail. Your trip includes a Live Mariachi Band, Mexican Food and an open bar with Tequila, Coronitas and Margaritas. The Mexican Party Sails on Friday from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

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day with the Discover Scuba Dive Course, get PADI certified or join us on our daily one and two tank dives. Red Sail Sports is Aruba's lead-ing dive and watersports operator. Activity desks are located at the Hyatt Regency, Marriott Resorts and on Renaissance Island.

To make reservations call 586-1603 or go to www.redsail-aruba.com. Be sure to visit one of Red Sail Sports' stores for the latest in swimwear, beach essentials, T-shirts and souvenirs.

Untouchables rock Happy Hour at Westin



PALM BEACH -- Cool Caribbean breezes, cocktails, and live music... now that's the recipe for a perfect island afternoon! Guests of the Tambu Bar at The Westin Resort, Aruba enjoy just that when local music sensation Los Intokables (The Untouchables) play live every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoon from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. The trio of musicians—Angelo, C-Zar, and Hubert—entertain with sets that seamlessly flow through a repertoire mélange of classic rock, pop, Latin, R



& B, and reggae. And you don't have to be a guest staying at The Westin to enjoy happy hour specials and live music; the Tambu Bar is just two steps off the Palm Beach walking path, so saunter on over and enjoy the best in live island music and beach side ambiance. □



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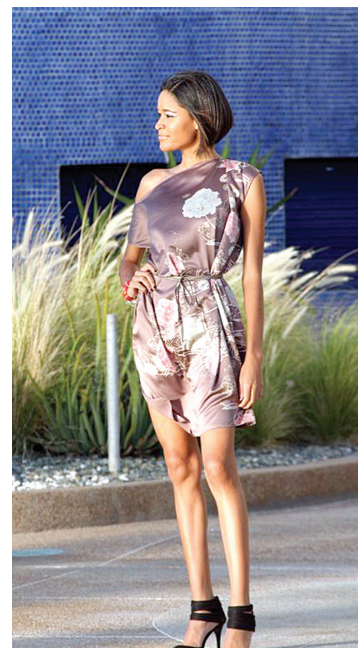
Westin guests enjoy fashion by the pool



PALM BEACH - On Friday and Sunday afternoons, guests of The Westin Resort, Aruba enjoyed a poolside fashion show, where New York designer Imani Alexander showcased her Ceola Holiday 2010 collection. The resort-wear spirit of the

Ceola collection was inspired by the designer's extensive travels, as well as her treasured grandmother. Fine silks from Europe are styled by Imani to create flowing, feminine lines, and the pieces in the Ceola collection are designed to flex from casual to sophisticated.

Following the show, guests enjoyed the opportunity to shop from the Ceola line of clothing and accessories, and meet and mingle with the designer. To learn more about the designer and shop online, go to www.ceolanyc.com. □



Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "From the pier to your plate!"

ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of **Driftwood Fishing Charters**, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant **Driftwood** in Oranjestad.

Driftwood owner Herby Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words



"fresh seafood" really mean. What Herby catches will be served in his restaurant on

the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35 ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50 ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on a daily basis from 8am to

Catch your own dinner

12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm. A charter includes: captain, mate, all fishing equipment, bait, sodas and bottled water. On a full day charter sandwiches and snacks are also included. You can call Herby directly at (297) 592 4040 or go to www.driftwoodaruba.com.

Rates:

\$380 - 1/2 day

\$760- full day

Rates per boat

Max. 6 people



Winners of Intl. LUHRS Marina Group Blue Marlin Release Tournament 2009

Driftwood Restaurant

This authentic Aruban seafood restaurant is located in characteristic downtown Oranjestad. Their extended

menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 3-course menu for just \$24.

Driftwood Restaurant

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*"Early Bird: daily 5-7pm
3-course dinner
for \$29.75 per person"*

Experience Papillon's gripping story!

Introducing a catching special for the early Birds

Papillon at The Village, across from the Radisson Resort, is a most unusual restaurant: having been named after Henri Charrière, France's most notorious escaped convict, its design is 'prison-style' chic. Cozy, elegant yet casual, it offers the best possible quality products, superb French wines and European seasonal delicacies, like mussels, white asparagus and game. The restaurant is best-known for its French-Caribbean cuisine, its excellent service and quest for perfection. The mellow, French music in the background will surely increase your appetite!

Celebrating its first successful year in business at The Village, Papillon has introduced its Early Bird dinner. Popular from the start, this is a three-course, classy dinner at a most affordable price. Get a taste of Papillon's cuisine from 5.00 until 7.00 pm and come back again and again to enjoy the restaurant's regular menu. Papillon's great staffers are very pleased to advise you which wine will enhance your dinner.

Henri Charrière, called 'Papillon' because of the butterfly tattoo on his chest, would never have thought that he would be the inspiration for this unique restaurant on Aruba. He has captured the imagination

of millions when he wrote the gripping, shocking story of his conviction, but now his nickname is a synonym for a superb evening out underneath the stars.

Bon appetite!

Opening hours

Papillon's opening hours are from 5 pm until midnight. The restaurant's daily specials will be explained by the staff. For reservations, please call 586 5400 or go to www.papillonaruba.com.

Papillon Restaurant is located in The Village, just across from the Radisson Resort.

Papillon
RESTAURANT

Kitchen open every day from 5pm till 10.30pm. Early Bird from 5pm till 7pm.
All major credit cards accepted. Reservations recommended.
Papillon Restaurant @ The Village (across from Radisson),
J.E. Irausquin Blvd 348-A, Palm Beach Tel: 586 5400
Email: reservations@papillonaruba.com Internet: www.papillonaruba.com





ORANJESTAD - Nyne (5) and Maartje (2) are having the time of their lives on Aruba; they love to swim in the pool at the Tamarijn Beach Resort, where they are staying with their parents Jos and Nynke. For them, Aruba holds very

Love is in the air in Aruba



special memories: they fell in love here. The tall story goes that the sparks they generated lit up the entire sky. Jos was a hunky male model, strutting the catwalks in Paris and Milan, when he first saw gorgeous, tall and blonde fellow model Nynke. Nothing happened between them until, years later, they happened to bump into each other on Aruba, of all places. In the meantime Nynke had chucked her career and was doing an internship here,



while Jos was living it up after having finished his studies at Nijenrode, Breukelen. That is when the fireworks ignited and love bloomed. Now, almost eight years later, the two are back on their favorite island, but now accompanied by two stunning,

sweet little girls, Nine and Maartje. These two have posing in their genes, to look at the photos. And we want to tell you a secret: Nine fell in love on Aruba too: with former shelter dog Charlie. You see: love is in the air on Aruba! □

Islands can request tasks wanted starting January

DAWN BEACH--St. Maarten and Curaçao will be able to request the transfer of the tasks they are ready to receive from January 2010.

The draft law on the transfer of tasks is expected to be debated in Parliament at the end of this month to pave the way for this.

Leader of Government and Constitutional Affairs Commissioner William Marlin told reporters at the end of the Political Steering Group (PSG) meeting on Thursday morning that the principal agreement was that this process would begin in the New Year. "If St. Maarten, for instance, says that we do not want a specific task before April, May, or June, that too can be arranged," he added.

"In terms of the funding, the principal agreement is that once you get the tasks, you get the funding that has been allocated in the budget for the respective island territories to become countries; and that is where the contention is with St. Maarten, because we are saying that if you transfer the funding that has been allocated

to St. Maarten, it [will not be] sufficient for St. Maarten to set up, in this transition phase, the full-fledged department or agency agreements that have been made in the past."

Constitutional Affairs Minister Roland Duncan had said last week that he would ensure that the legal aspect was finalised by January.

"In principal, all the tasks can be transferred between now and 10-10-10, and by 10-10-10 all will [be transferred], but it is up to Curaçao and St. Marten to decide what tasks they want.

"At present, the Netherlands Antilles [NA] is carrying out all the tasks of the NA. Those tasks are being carried out

by ... persons, 99.9 per cent of whom live in Curaçao. Of course there are some people who live on other islands in specific areas like the police, but in general ... the brunt of the work or departments, directors and staffing are in Curaçao. The point of departure is that when Curaçao becomes a country and inherits

the human capital of the NA, it can carry out the task of future Country Curaçao.

He pointed to service level agreement between civil servants in Curaçao and St. Maarten, which gives St. Maarten the option to enter into an agreement to purchase services from Curaçao or the Netherlands if it so desires.

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Hija del ex presidente Fujimori consolida ventaja para elección 2011

LIMA (Reuters) - El alcalde de la capital de Perú consolidó su liderazgo en la contienda para la elección presidencial del 2011, mientras que la hija del ex presidente Alberto Fujimori permaneció en el segundo puesto con un leve retroceso en las preferencias, mostró el lunes un sondeo.

Luis Castañeda, el alcalde de Lima que congrega la mayor plaza electoral del país andino, lidera las preferencias con un 23 por ciento, nivel similar al del mes pasado, reflejó el sondeo realizado por la firma Ipsos Apoyo y publicado por el diario El Comercio.

Castañeda goza de una mayor adhesión en la capital, donde alcanza un 31 por ciento; y en la región sur del país, donde lidera con un 17 por ciento. Keiko Fujimori, cuyo padre fue condenado a 25 años de prisión por abusos a los derechos humanos, encabezó por varios meses las encuestas, pero actualmente figura en el



El alcalde de la capital de Perú consolidó su liderazgo en la contienda para la elección presidencial del 2011, mientras que la hija del ex presidente Alberto Fujimori, Keiko (foto), permaneció en el segundo puesto con un leve retroceso en las preferencias, mostró el lunes un sondeo. REUTERS/Mariana Bazo/Archivo

segundo puesto con un 20 por ciento de las preferencias, por debajo del 22 por ciento del sondeo previo.

La legisladora conservadora

lidera las preferencias en el centro del país sudamericano, con un 31 por ciento, y en el norte peruano, con un 15 por ciento.

Por otro lado, el nacionalista

Humala, un aliado del presidente socialista de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, inquietó a los inversores cuando casi se convierte en presidente en el 2006 con sus promesas de dar un giro en la política de libre mercado que atrajo miles de millones de dólares en inversiones extranjeras al país.

El líder opositor tiene como bastión electoral la parte este del país, donde un 19 por ciento apoya su eventual candidatura. Asimismo, el ex presidente Alejandro Toledo ha ido trepando consistentemente, arribando en el cuarto lugar con un 9 por ciento y acercándose al izquierdista Humala.

El presidente Alan García, quien no puede postular a una reelección inmediata y cuya gestión es aprobada escasamente por un 29 por ciento, culminará su mandato de cinco años en julio del 2011. □

En Colombia:

Pagan 871.000 dólares de recompensa por captura narco

BOGOTÁ (AP) - Un jefe policial reveló el lunes que pagará 871.000 dólares a cuatro informantes por pistas que llevaron a la captura de un narco-paramilitar que describe como pieza clave en el aparato criminal de un buscado traficante colombiano.

La policía capturó el viernes por la noche a Martín Farfán Díaz, de 42 años, en una zona rural de Mapiripán, en el departamento de Meta, a unos 300 kilómetros al suroeste de Bogotá. El detenido fue presentado en la jornada ante los periodistas en la sede de la Dirección de Policía de Investigaciones Judiciales (Dijin) al oeste de Bogotá.

“Esta operación duró cuatro meses (de investigaciones), y el éxito de la captura está dada en la información precisa que nos dieron habitantes del Meta sobre este delincuente y cuatro personas recibirán la recompensa de 1.700 millones de pesos” o 871.000 dólares, dijo el general Luis Ramírez, director de la Dijin, en conferencia de prensa.

Ramírez aseguró que Farfán Díaz, quien operaba en los sureños departamentos de Meta, Vichada y Guainía, era el jefe de los pistoleros o el aparato armado del buscado Pedro Guerrero Castillo, alias “Cuchillo”, descrito por las autoridades como entre los principales narcotraficantes actuales en Colombia.

Por Guerrero Castillo las autoridades colombianas ofrecen el pago de una recompensa de 5.000 millones de pesos (unos 2,5 millones de dólares). Ramírez aseguró que el capturado formó parte de un bloque paramilitar llamado “Héroes del Llano”, que operó en Meta, hasta su desmovilización a partir del 2005.

El oficial aseguró que sobre Farfán, quien fue detenido junto a otros cuatro hombres, estaban pendientes órdenes de captura de la Fiscalía por delitos como homicidio y narcotráfico y que aún no hay un pedido de extradición por parte de Estados Unidos. □

En Paraguay

Lugo: no hay apoyo para “aventura antidemocrática”

ASUNCION (AP) - El presidente Fernando Lugo dirigió el lunes un mensaje al país enfatizando que la oposición no avanza en su abierto deseo de someterlo a juicio político porque “el pueblo y la comunidad internacional no apoyan una aventura antidemocrática”.

El discurso de Lugo no estaba previsto en el palacio de Gobierno ya que sólo debía recibir el lunes el saludo de embajadores con motivo de las fiestas de fin de año. “No es de sorprenderse que desde el comienzo de nuestro gobierno hasta hoy, algunos sectores y personalidades hayan sufrido varias veces la tentación autoritaria de interrumpir el proceso político decidido democráticamente por el pueblo el 20 de abril de 2008”, dijo el jefe de estado.

Hizo alusión a las reiteradas advertencias de parlamentarios oficialistas y opositores sobre un eventual juicio político por presunto mal desempeño de sus funciones y porque, supuestamente, en sus discursos públicos realiza un llamado a la lucha de clases. En el Congreso de 125 escaños (80 diputados y 45 senadores), el Presidente cuenta con la fidelidad irrestricta de tan sólo tres legisladores. □

Magnate opositor Sebastián Piñera tras los votos para segunda vuelta en Chile

SANTIAGO (Reuters) - El magnate opositor de derecha Sebastián Piñera, quien ganó la primera ronda de las elecciones presidenciales en Chile, dijo el lunes que buscará el apoyo de los votos que quedaron en el camino rumbo a la reñida segunda vuelta que disputará con el oficialista Eduardo Frei. Piñera no logró la mayoría absoluta el domingo, pero su votación lo dejó en una buena marca para un balotaje el 17 de enero que podría poner fin a casi 20 años de gobiernos de centroizquierda, tras la dictadura de Augusto Pinochet.

El empresario, con una fortuna de 1.000 millones de dólares según Forbes y que quiere más incentivos a los privados, obtuvo un 44,05 por ciento, según el último conteo oficial con un 99,42 por ciento de las mesas escrutadas.

Un Gobierno de Piñera, uno de los controladores de la aerolínea LAN y accionista del popular club de fútbol Colo Colo, no implicaría un cambio profundo en la política económica de apertura que ha convertido a Chile, el mayor

productor de cobre del mundo, en un modelo de estabilidad.

El ex presidente Frei, candidato de la coalición Concertación en el poder y que ha prometido seguir con las políticas de la popular mandataria Michelle Bachelet, logró el segundo lugar, con un 29,6 por ciento de los sufragios.

Bachelet aceptó el lunes la renuncia de su ministra portavoz, Carolina Tohá, una cercana colaboradora que pasó a integrar el comando de Frei. La presidenta, quien anticipó un “trabajo muy intenso” para sus tres últimos meses en el poder, dijo que Tohá será sucedida por la embajadora Pilar Armanet.

El candidato de derecha, de 60 años, dijo que la elección superó sus propias expectativas y que se abocará a captar los votos de quienes buscan un cambio, haciendo un guiño a los que votaron por el candidato independiente Marco Enríquez-Ominami, quien logró un tercer lugar en los sufragios.

“Nadie es dueño de los ciudadanos, ni de los votos y, por tanto, (...) los que quieran el cambio (...) saben muy



El opositor de derecha Sebastián Piñera (izq) saluda a simpatizantes tras una misa en Santiago, 13 dic 2009. REUTERS/Victor Ruiz Caballero

bien que en nuestro proyecto y en nuestra campaña está el verdadero cambio”, dijo Piñera al canal de televisión TVN. El magnate ha dicho que en un eventual Gobierno permitiría a los fondos de pensiones privados tomar en conjunto hasta un 20 por ciento de la propiedad del gigante estatal del cobre Codelco, el gran proveedor de las arcas fiscales

del país.

Según sondeos de opinión, una parte de los sufragios de Marco Enríquez-Ominami, quien sacó un 20,13 por ciento, pasaría a Frei y otra, menor, iría al empresario en el balotaje. Pese al cómodo triunfo de Piñera, analistas creen que la segunda vuelta no es una “carrera corrida” ya que el comportamiento

de los votantes tiene factores impredecibles.

“La segunda vuelta no es un simple trámite, es extraordinariamente difícil proyectar sobre todo por qué el equipo de Frei no tenía un ‘plan B’ frente a esto”, dijo Carlos Huneeus, director de CERC, cuyas proyecciones antes de la elección estuvieron en línea con los resultados. □

Brasil y EEUU quieren salida de Micheletti en Honduras

BRASILIA (AP) - Brasil y Estados Unidos, que han discrepado sobre el golpe de estado en Honduras, coincidieron el lunes en la necesidad de que el presidente de facto Roberto Micheletti abandone el poder y que se facilite la salida del derrocado Manuel Zelaya.

Valenzuela inició el lunes en Brasil su primera gira por América del Sur desde que asumió como el responsable para América Latina en el gobierno del presidente Barack Obama. Posteriormente irá a Argentina, Uruguay y Paraguay.

El tema estuvo en el centro de las conversaciones que tuvo el secretario de Estado adjunto para el Hemisferio Occidental, Arturo Valenzuela, con el asesor internacional del presidente Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Marco Aurelio García.

“Estamos de acuerdo en que el presidente Micheletti debe partir, eso es un paso importante, y sería

importante que se conceda un salvoconducto u otro instrumento que permita al presidente Zelaya” salir de la embajada brasileña de Tegucigalpa, dijo García a periodistas.

García aseguró que “la preocupación del profesor Valenzuela y del gobierno brasileño es que la situación de Honduras no se constituya en un precedente que desestabilice democráticamente la región de América Central, donde los procesos democráticos son más recientes”.

Dos semanas antes de la visita del diplomático norteamericano de origen chileno, García había comentado que existía un “cierto sentimiento de decepción” con el gobierno Obama, entre otros factores por su posición con Honduras.

Brasil se ha negado a reconocer el resultado de las elecciones del 30 de noviembre, en las que resultó electo el conservador Porfirio Lobo, al considerar que fueron realizadas bajo un gobierno ilegítimo, mientras

Estados Unidos aceptó el resultado de los comicios.

No obstante, el lunes García dijo que se trata de una “pequeña diferencia” y recordó que Washington aún considera que Zelaya, derrocado el 28 de junio, es el presidente legítimo de Honduras.

Zelaya se encuentra hospedado en la embajada brasileña en Tegucigalpa desde septiembre, cuando ingresó subrepticamente a su país. La semana pasada, México puso un avión a disposición de Zelaya para que saliera de Honduras, pero la operación se frustró.

“Es fundamental que el presidente (Zelaya) pueda salir para tener los contactos políticos necesarios” para definir su futuro, sostuvo García.

El presidente dominicano Leonel Fernández organizó un encuentro entre Zelaya y Lobo en Santo Domingo, pero la reunión prevista para el domingo se aplazó. □



Un partidario del depuesto presidente de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, participa en una manifestación para conmemorar el aniversario 10 de Radio Globo, en Tegucigalpa, 11 dic 2009. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

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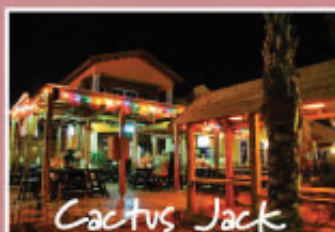


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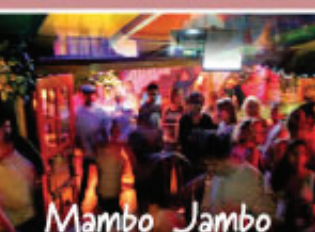
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